

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 EB-11 SCI-06

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FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7420

INFO AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 809

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EMIN

SUBJECT: FRANCE, GABON AND NIGER HOLD URANIUM TALKS

REF: NIAMEY 758

1. FRENCH, GABONESE AND NIGERIEN DELEGATION MET IN NIAMEY MARCH 25-26 TO DISCUSS URANIUM EXPLOITATION. THE DELEGATIONS WERE LED BY: YVES GUENA, FRENCH MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND HANDICRAFTS; M'BOUY BOUTZIT, GABONESE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINES, INDUSTRY, ENERGY AND WATER RESOURCES; AND BOUBOU HAMA, PRESIDENT OF NIGER' NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

2. FINAL COMMUNIQUE STATED ONLY THAT THREE PARTIES HAD AGREED UPON IMPORTANCE OF URANIUM FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COUNTRIES, AND REAFFIRMED THEIR DETERMINATION TO APPROACH QUESTION IN CONSTRUCTIVE ATMOSPHERE. THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO STRESSED THAT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE HELD IN NEAR FUTURE.

3. COMMENT: GABON AND NIGER APPARENTLY PLANNED THEIR JOINT STRETEGY FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE EARLIER THIS MONTH WHEN PRESIDENT DIORI VISITED GABON (REFTEL). THE TWO URANIUM PRODUCING COUNTRIES INFORMED FRANCE THAT THEY WANT URANIUM REVENUES TO PLAY LARGER ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

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OF THEIR OWN ECONOMIEWS. THEY PROPESED THAT FRANCE INCREASE

PRICE PAID FOR URANIUM AS WELL AS ENLARGE THE SHARE OF TOTAL BENEFITS. FRENCH REPORTEDLY BALKED AT PAYING HIGHER PRICES SINCE THEY ALLEGE THEY ALREADY PAYING NIGER AND GABON MORE THAN CURRENT MARKET PRICE. ON SECOND PROPOSAL, FRENCH APPARENTLY WILLING TO CONSIDER NEW ARRANGEMENTS, BUT NEED MORE TIME TO FORMULATE SPECIFICS. NEGOTIATIONS EXPECTED CONTINUE LATE APRIL IN NIAMEY.

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Message Attributes

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